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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

SUBJECT Steel Enterprise at Vitkovice: Physical Set-Up and
Workers/Morale, Working Conditions and Political
Training

REPORT

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Physical Set-Up/Workers

1. "The enterprise at Vitkovice is situated in an area 1200 x 1100 meters enclosed by a wooden fence 150 cm high.

There are about 7000 workers in this enterprise (on 3 shifts). Of this number, 1800 are women. The brigadiers have worked in this enterprise too. The prisoners (forced laborers) were employed on the most dangerous working places. There is a forced labor camp near the enterprise, at the depot for iron ore. In this camp were 500 prisoners. A large number of these prisoners worked in the camp.

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Personnel

2. "There were no Soviet employees in this factory. [Prior to April 1953.] The enterprise was guarded by members of the workers militia, armed with pistols. There were still two gatekeepers in the gatekeeper's room.

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Morale/Working Conditions/Political Training

3. "The working morale was very bad. The workers were disappointed with the wages and there was just one Sunday off in a month. Everybody was obliged to work three Sundays each month; otherwise he would receive a forced discount from his wages and would lose his supplementary rations. Most of the workers lived in the neighborhood of the factory. Most workers ate at home and those who were obliged to have meals in the workers' mess were infuriated with the bad quality of the food. Political schooling of employees took place three times a week. The first workers' meeting was at 6 am and lasted for two hours. The topic for political discussion was news of the world, especially the optimistic news from Communist countries, such as China, the USSR and the Eastern European Satellites, and from the Western countries with a powerful Communist minority. The discussion leaders were mostly professionals, employed for this purpose by the central management of the pits of Moravská Ostrava; only occasionally were

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